

FOIAb3b

St. Louis Post Dispatch, 22 Nov 66

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 19 Nov 66

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

Government Pressure Hurting Research, Anthropologist Says

© 1966, New York Times News Service
PITTSBURGH, Nov. 18 — A

leading American anthropologist said last night that secrecy and pressures from government intelligence agencies were eroding the effectiveness and prestige of American scholarly research abroad.

The warning was in a report delivered by Ralph L. Beals at the opening of the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association.

Beals, a professor of anthropology at the University of California and former president of the association has spent the last year studying the effect of government-sponsored social science research in foreign countries.

He criticized what he described as efforts by some government agencies to disguise political intelligence work under the cover of scholarly research. He said there had been instances when young scholars were offered generous government assistance, ostensibly for academic work, only to be questioned later by intelligence agents for political information.

Beals disclosed reports that

some intelligence agents were posing as anthropologists in foreign countries. They were easily discovered, by scholars in the countries where they operated because they lacked technical knowledge and academic references, he said.

"In fact," he said with a smile, "in some areas like the Middle East they prefer the 'anthropological spy' because he is so naive and they can feed him all sort of information."

Beals said anthropologists had been particularly hurt by the furor caused last year over operation Camelot, an Army-financed study of social change in Chile. The project, which was part of a far-ranging study of revolutionary processes in various parts of the world, was canceled at the request of Secretary of State Dean Rusk after the Chilean government made a formal protest.

Scholars Playing James Bond

Our cloak-and-dagger gentry are bright as a hoarded Kennedy dollar and sharp as an electric carving knife—between the covers of a "spy mystery." In the field, however, they often are naive enough to be welcomed by their opposite numbers and stuffed with misinformation.

According to Dr. Ralph L. Beals this is particularly true of intelligence agents posing as anthropologists. They are easily spotted because of their ignorance. Himself an anthropologist, Dr. Beals is deeply disturbed by the effect of this continuing huggermugger on scholarship. Under a variation of Gresham's law, the pseudo-experts are eroding the effectiveness of the genuine. American scholars abroad are being frustrated by the suspicion that their activities are covers for espionage. We are developing another credibility deficit.

Universities are to blame to the extent that they accept contracts with the CIA and similar agencies. Dr. Beals has compiled a report on specific incidents, including, of course, Operation Camelot which ended in such a painful, public fiasco. He believes that it has become essential for scholars to fully disclose "not only their support and sponsorship but also the purposes of their research." But will such disclosures still be accepted at face value?

The Government certainly should check ill-advised and irresponsible activities. It should avoid the use of scholars as spies, and end the questioning of legitimate researchers on their return to the United States, except under the most compelling circumstances. Scholars have an obligation to resist the lure

of grants which undermine professional integrity. The advance of knowledge depends on integrity.

If this is shadowed by even a few questionable undertakings, the long-run cost may be far greater than any immediate value of a hush-hush operation. Americans might be effectively excluded from the international company of scholars and scientists. Instead of sacrificing credibility and risking isolation, James Bond's work ought to be left to James Bond.

CPYRGHT